

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20

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EUR/NE - CFLOYD

ODD/ISA - RADMR. BIGLEY

J-3 - COL ATKINSON

NAVY - CAPT MARSHAL

----- 088807

P R 282200Z AUG 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

JCS

CNO

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

COMSEVENTHFLT

COMUSMACTHAI

CTF72

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 189354

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PING, MILL, MOPS, TH, UK, US, XOSUBJECT: OBSERVAT
ION TRIP TO DIEGO GARCIA

REF: A. LONDON 10912; B. STATE 179217

1. IN VIEW OF PUBLICITY CHATCHAI HAS ALREADY GIVEN TO THE
PROPOSED OBSERVATION TRIP ABOARD A P-3 FLIGHT FROM U TAPAO
TO DIEGO GARCIA, WE COULD CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND BRITISH
RELUCTANCE TO CONCUR IN THE VISIT. NONETHELESS, WE ARE IN
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A DIFFICULT POSITION WITH CHATCHAI AND WOULD PREFER TO

AVOID CAUSING HIM TO LOSE FACE THROUGH AN EXPLICIT TURN DOWN. NOW THAT THE MATTER HAS GOTTEN THIS FAR, HIS, RTG'S AND GENERAL THAI REACTION (ASSUMING TURNDOWN LEAKED TO PUBLIC) COULD SET BACK OUR EFFORTS TO GAIN THAI SUPPORT FOR OUR INDIAN OCEAN OPERATIONS. IF HMG COULD SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO APPROVE THE VISIT, NOTWITHSTANDING THE PUBLICITY THAT CHATCHAI HAS GIVEN IT AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT WOULD STIMULATE ADDITIONAL THIRD COUNTRY REQUESTS TO SEE THE ISLAND, IT WOULD HELP US IN MEETING THIS PROBLEM. HOWEVER, WE ASSUME THAT JACKSON'S ALARM SUGGESTS THE FORMAL POSITION HMG MAY TAKE AND WE THEREFORE CONCLUDE THAT WE MAY NOW BE ENGAGED IN AN EXERCISE IN DAMAGE CONTROL. IF HMG DOES NOT APPROVE VISIT, PERHAPS THE BEST WE CAN DO IS CONVINCING CHATCHAI THAT THE TRIP MUST BE POSTPONED BECAUSE OF BRITISH CONCERNS ENGENDERED BY THE PUBLICITY WHICH HE HAS GIVEN TO IT.

2. FOR LONDON: YOU SHOULD TELL JACKSON IT WAS WITH BRITISH CONCERNS IN MIND THAT WE ORIGINALLY INDICATED THAT WE WOULD NOT SCHEDULE THE TRIP IF IT SEEMED LIKELY TO ATTRACT SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC ATTENTION. HOWEVER, WHILE WE CERTAINLY COULD UNDERSTAND HMG'S RELUCTANCE TO AUTHORIZE CHATCHAI'S VISIT TO DIEGO GARCIA, WE HOPE HMG AT LEAST CAN AGREE TO POSTPONEMENT IF IT BELIEVE IT CANNOT CONCUR IN A VISIT AT THIS TIME. THIS WOULD ALLOW US TO PUT CHATCHAI OFF WITH A MINIMUM RISK OF RETALIATORY ACTION ON HIS PART. YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL JACKSON THAT, SHOULD THE FORMAL HMG POSITION ON A VISIT AT THIS TIME BE NEGATIVE, WE WOULD PROPOSE TO EXPLAIN THE POSTPONEMENT TO CHATCHAI IN TERMS OF BRITISH CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS FROM HIS INTERVIEW WITH NATION, SPECIFICALLY THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT WILL ENCOURAGE OTHER THIRD COUNTRY OFFICIALS TO BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE NICE TO VISIT DIEGO GARCIA. THE FORMAL HMG POSITION, WHEN RECEIVED, SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY BANGKOK BY PRIORITY CABLE. KISSINGER

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